

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Call to Order: By **VICE CHAIRMAN DAVE LEWIS**, on January 16, 2001
at 3:37 P.M., in Room 102 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Dave Lewis, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Matt McCann, Vice Chairman (D)
Rep. John Brueggeman (R)
Rep. Rosalie (Rosie) Buzzas (D)
Rep. Edith Clark (R)
Rep. Bob Davies (R)
Rep. Dick Haines (R)
Rep. Joey Jayne (D)
Rep. Dave Kasten (R)
Rep. Christine Kaufmann (D)
Rep. Monica Lindeen (D)
Rep. Jeff Pattison (R)
Rep. Art Peterson (R)
Rep. Joe Tropila (D)
Rep. John Witt (R)

Members Excused: Rep. Steve Vick, Chairman (R)
Rep. Tim Callahan (D)
Rep. Stanley Fisher (R)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Paula Broadhurst, Committee Secretary
Taryn Purdy, Legislative Branch

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and
discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: HB 217 HB 227,
1/14/2001

Executive Action:

HEARING ON HB 227

Sponsor: Rep. Joe Tropila

Proponents: Sen. Deb Shea, SD 18, Butte, Robert Pavlovich, self, Patti Keebler, MT AFL-CIO

Opponents: None.

Informational Witness: Kevin Braun, Montana Department of Labor and Industry

OPENING STATEMENT BY SPONSOR:

Rep. Joe Tropila, HD 47, Great Falls, introduced HB 227 commenting that he is sponsoring it because an Appropriations Bill cannot be introduced in the Senate, and that HB 227 actually belongs to Sen. Deb Shea.

PROPONENTS TESTIMONY:

Sen. Deb Shea, SD 18, Butte, commented that HB 227 would appropriate funds to the Department of Labor and Industry to increase the silicosis benefits for individuals receiving it by \$25 a month. **EXHIBIT(aph12a01)**

Robert Pavlovich, former Representative testifying on behalf of himself, commented that HB 227 will automatically faze itself out over a period of time. He then stated that in 5-6 years the bill will be obsolete and the money won't be there and it would be nice to give the 21 people left recieving funds and still alive, another \$25 a month.

Patti Keebler, Montana AFL-CIO, commented what a modest increase this benefit is to silicosis sufferers and their survivors.

OPPONENTS: None.

INFORMATIONAL WITNESS:

Kevin Braun, Montana Department of Labor and Industry, commented and explained the amendment to the bill. **EXHIBIT(aph12a02)**

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Rep. Kasten asked what the need is for the amendment.

Kevin Braun answered by stating that as long as there are people out there with silicosis the benefit level will need to be specified.

Rep. Kauffman asked if anyone gets this disease anymore and if there was a cure now.

Sen. Shea answered by stating that there are still some that get it but that it is a very limited number and there are at least 2 requests a year. Since 1998 there has only been one qualifier for the benefit.

Rep. Kauffman asked then if the disease comes from a particular activity such as mining.

Sen. Shea answered stating that mining was the original reasoning for this type of legislation.

Rep. Davies asked why this disease was singled out.

Robert Pavlovich answered because of the mining in Silver Bowe County, and gave an example of his mother losing two husbands due to the silicosis disease.

Rep. Haines asked if there are any other benefits incurred by these people for the silicosis disease.

Sen. Shea answered that she didn't think so and that this was the only benefit available to these people, and that nothing comes from Congress either.

Rep. McCann asked if the level of benefit will increase a little bit and if the total amount that was paid out in 1999 would remain the same as paid out in fiscal year 2001.

Sen. Shea answered by stating that no, it will be less because 11 people receiving this benefit have died since, and that the amount is down \$33,000 in benefits paid out.

Sen. Shea then made a statement in closing that silica dust breathed in during construction work is also a cause of this disease.

CLOSING BY SPONSOR:

Rep. Haines closed on HB 227.

{Tape : 1; Side : A; Approx. Time Counter : 14}

HEARING ON HB 217

SPONSOR: Rep. Rosalie Buzzas

PROPONENTS: Betty Whiting, Montana Association of Churches; Steve Yeakel, Montana Council for Maternal and Child Health; Sharon Hoff-Brodowy, Montana Catholic Conference; Cheryl Kikkert, Montana Association WIC Agencies; Bruce Jones, Hamilton Farmers' Market; Lisa Arellano-Wyatt, Consumer; Mary Pittaway, Montana Dietetic Association, Montana Public Health Association; Art Loendorf, Montana Farmers Union; Chet Kinsey, Montana Farmers Union, MSCA; Rep. Allan Walters, Hamilton Farmers Market; Wendy Young, WEEL.

OPPONENTS: None.

INFORMATIONAL WITNESS: Terry Krantz, Health and Human Services WIC Director.

Rep. Rosie Buzzas, HD 65, Missoula, introduced HB 217 commenting that it will provide a state match for federal dollars for Montana communities to participate in the WIC Farmers Market program. **EXHIBIT (aph12a03)**

PROPONENTS:

Cheryl Kikkert, WIC Agency, Hamilton, commented that last year they piloted 6 sites funded by a small fund from General Mills and the local agencies also raised some additional money. She stated that the reason they felt a need for this program was that when they meet with families and teach them about nutrition, many families were missing fruits and vegetables in their diets. She then went on to say that they modeled their pilot projects after the National Farmers Market Nutrition Program. She stated that they have noticed that this program benefits three diverse groups: the WIC participants, family farms, and communities who come into the downtown area for the market. She then went on to name some supporters they have been in contact with.

EXHIBIT (aph12a04)

Lisa Arellano-Wyatt, Consumer, commented that she is a WIC recipient and has used the Farmers Market with the vouchers given to her through WIC, and that she and daughter Precious enjoy going to the Farmers Market and receiving fresh fruits and vegetables. She stated what a wonderful program this is for young children and families.

Rep. Alan Walters, HD 60, Hamilton, told the committee about his experience selling at Farmers Market and the benefits of a Farmers Market for both the consumer and the producer, including even the smaller producers. He noted how small and big vendors alike do well selling in Farmers Markets.

Betty Whiting, Montana Association of Churches, encouraged the committee to support this bill and stated that they are concerned for the farmers in the state of Montana and how Farmers Markets are revitalizing communities. She stated that it is an excellent program which will be recycled through the communities in Montana. She noted that Sharon Hoff, representing the Montana Catholic Conference, wanted to add their support for this program.

Chet Kinsey, Montana Farmers Union, stated that this program gives the people who need it the most, a chance to buy fresh produce when they can't. He stated it also keeps the money in the communities and generates money into the community from the federal funds that come in.

{Tape : 1; Side : A; Approx. Time Counter : 29}

Mary Pittaway, Montana Dietetic Association, Montana Public Health Association, Director of WIC in Missoula County, stated that they have operated a pilot Farmers Market WIC program in Missoula for six years. She said that WIC is a short term public health intervention program and families usually stay on it for two to three years in times of need and then graduate off to create spots for new families. The program introduces a lot of families to the Farmers Market and fresh produce.

Wendy Young, WEEL, commented what a fabulous program this is and that it helps children and families develop the great habit of incorporating fruits and vegetables into their daily diets.

Bruce Jones, Hamilton Farmers Market, commented where he sees that the WIC program brings out families to the Farmers Market and how they can offer fresh produce at better prices.

Art Loendorf, Montana Farmers Union, stated how this program fits perfectly with Vision 2205 premise. He said it helps farmers by eliminating the middleman and puts the money directly in the pockets of Montana producers and has the added benefit of helping children eat more nutritiously. **EXHIBIT(aph12a05)**

Steve Yeakel, Montana Council for Maternal Child and Health, stated how important this bill is, and how it is as "win win" as a bill can get. He urged the committee to support it.

OPPONENTS: None.

INFORMATIONAL WITNESS:

Terry Krantz, Department of Health and Human Services, Montana WIC Director, stated he is available for questions.

EXHIBIT (aph12a06)

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE:

Rep. Jayne asked if a budget for this bill had been submitted.

Terry Krantz answered by stating that a budget had been submitted for WIC and was written up but did not make it out of the Department so it is not included in the Department or the Governor's Budget.

Rep. Haines asked why current funding can't cover the cost for WIC.

Rep. Buzzas answered that this part of WIC was added on and is an adjunct program so you have to apply for a state match in order to receive federal funding for this particular Program.

Rep. Haines asked if there was something in the current funding that does not allow recipients to receive fresh produce.

Rep. Buzzas commented that the current WIC Program only allows for eggs, milk, cheese, beans, cereal, and juice and does not allow the purchase of fresh produce.

{Tape : 1; Side : B; Approx. Time Counter : 15}

Rep. Haines asked if the current WIC Program restricts what the money can be spent on.

Rep. Buzzas answered that is correct and that the Farmers Market Program, will only allow for fresh fruits and vegetables, and will not allow the purchase of any other items available at the Farmers Markets such as crafts, etc.

Rep. Haines then asked if the money disbursed was through coupons.

Rep. Buzzas stated that is correct.

Rep. McCann asked why it only addresses Farmers Markets, because not all of Montana has access to Farmers Markets, instead of the issue that people need vegetables in their diets.

Rep. Buzzas answered that the reason the bill was fashioned this way was because the Federal Government fashioned the bill so that the Program would be set up for Farmers Markets, and it allows Montana to participate in the Program and match the monies.

Rep. McCann, then asked, say if the committee supports Rep. Buzzas bill, but the General Fund is getting really tight, are there other matches for the Federal dollars other than the General Fund.

Rep. Buzzas answered that she is open to any other source but what cannot be done is matching any existing Federal Funds in the Department Budget. It would have to be an independent source and that is why the General Fund came to mind, to match money.

Art Loendorf, adding to Rep. McCann's question about access to Farmers Markets, stated that statistics show that places that didn't have Farmers' Markets either, as the program grew, so did the Farmers Markets.

Rep. Lewis made the comment that he, Rep. Clark, and Rep. Jayne are on the Appropriations Committee for Health and Human Services and that they might go through that budget very carefully to see if there might be \$40-60,000 per year out of a \$2.1 billion dollar budget. They would report back as their deliberations continued.

CLOSING ON HB 217:

Rep. Buzzas closed on HB 217.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 4:25 P.M.

REP. STEVE VICK, Chairman

PAULA BROADHURST, Secretary

SV/PB

EXHIBIT (aph12aad)